

BRENTWOOD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES OF 9/29/09 MEETING

Convened: 6:30 p.m.
Present: Jeffrey Bryan
Andrew Artimovich
Jane Byrne
David Menter
George Waldron

The Board met and reviewed payroll, accounts payable, and signed the register. The Board reviewed and signed the recreation manifest.

Jonathan Ellis was in to present the weekly Treasurer's report.

Jim Michaud, Town Assessor, was in to explain the purpose of tonight's meeting with Mr. Webb. Mr. Michaud explained that the Board of Tax & Land Appeal instituted a method to try to get rid of a lot of cases on their docket. They now order communities and tax payers to sit down and discuss the possibility of a settlement. Michaud reviewed the information pertaining to Mr. Webb's application for abatement and Michaud's recommendation to approve an adjustment of the assessment from \$152,342 to \$120,342. He continued that although this is a 20+ acre parcel, most of it is in current use so the market value test should not be applied to that. You can say that the current use parcel has a positive impact on the building lot but you're not valuing it as a 20.3 acre parcel. You should only be looking at the 80,000 sq ft that is not in current use and the 1958 mobile home that is on there. The net tax dollar amount for the lowering of the assessment is approximately \$700. If the Board wishes to go forward with the BTLA, the hearing will take place in about 2 years, Michaud or someone else will go and say they can or can not support the assessment. There will be a cost associated with going forward which may exceed the \$700 in tax dollars. Artimovich explained that when the Board of Selectmen looked at it a couple months ago, they looked at the entire 20+ acres and weren't aware that they should only be looking at the building lot and mobile home.

The Selectmen reviewed the minutes of the 9/22/09 meeting. Waldron made a motion, seconded by Artimovich, to approve the minutes as written. All members voted in favor.

The Board reviewed the notes:

- Former Selectmen Don Somers passed away. Calling hours will be held on 10/1 from 4-7pm. Byrne made a motion to make a donation to the American Kidney Foundation in lieu of flowers. Motion was seconded by Artimovich; all voted in favor.
- The gas to the generator at the BCC will be hooked up by 10/9.

Julie Stevens presented the Board with some additional employee handbook changes for them to consider that she drafted after reviewing a sample from LGC. These include:

- A welcome letter.
- Equal Employment Opportunity & Policy Against Harassment
- A more extensive Sexual Harassment section
- A more extensive Worker's Compensation Insurance section which includes reporting workplace injuries.
- An expanded FMLA policy

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- New solicitation & distribution section
- Workplace Violence segment is new
- A revised Receipt & Acknowledgement page

The Board would like to take a week to review these items before voting on them. Copies were made to distribute to department heads.

The Board signed/reviewed the following:

- A timber cut permit for Kathleen Shippee of 171 Pickpocket Road
- An abatement application for 375 Middle Road. Jim Michaud has reviewed the application and visited the property and found that a gazebo that was listed on the tax card needs to be removed, adjusting the assessment from \$284,600 to \$282,600. Byrne made a motion, seconded by Artimovich, to approve the abatement. All voted in favor.
- The handout for the department heads with information for their 2010 budgets.
- The proposed Employee/Personnel File Procedures were reviewed. Menter would like the first sentence of the procedure changed to add “secured” along with “locked file cabinet.” The Board would like the files to be reviewed in the Selectmen’s office rather than in a meeting room at the Town Office. Menter questioned who would be allowed to retrieve/give-out the personnel files. Stevens responded that it would be herself or Carolyn in her absence. In addition, the Selectmen asked that the word “criminal” be inserted in front of “investigation” in the 3rd paragraph.

Mr. Robert Webb was in to meet with the Selectmen, as requested by the NH Board of Tax and Land Appeal, for a negotiating session regarding his denied abatement application. The Board reviewed Jim Michaud’s recommendation with Mr. Webb that the assessment be lowered from \$152,342 to \$120,342. They explained that they had previously denied the application as they were looking at the value of the entire 20+ acre parcel and that Michaud had just corrected them by pointing out that they should just be looking at the building lot. Byrne made a motion that the Selectmen support Michaud’s recommendation. Webb said he had hired an unbiased appraiser who valued the mobile home at \$1,000. Michaud clarified that what they need to be looking at is the value as of 4/1/2008. He continued that during the appraisal process for this property, by both him and the individual hired by Mr. Webb, neither of them had any good comparables for a 1958 mobile home. Webb questioned Michaud’s assessment of the mobile home at \$9,900. Michaud responded that if they are to go to the BTLA that what they are going to ask is not about the assessment of the land and building separately, but at the assessment of the entire parcel of \$120,342 and whether or not that is an accurate market value. Michaud said that the \$100,000 purchase price that Mr. Webb paid for the property in March of 2008 is not a typical arms-length transaction as it was not exposed to the market. Michaud continued that the property potentially could have been sold for more had other abutters had the opportunity. Webb said that his independent appraiser submitted a market value of \$86,000 as the market has gone downhill steadily. Artimovich responded that we can not look at the market today, we have to look at it as of 4/1/2008 and that Webb had paid at least \$100,000 for it in March of 2008. Michaud explained that the Town is going through a reevaluation for 2010 and that it is possible that Webb would be living with this proposed reassessment for ’08 and ’09 and it may get reduced further during the town-wide reevaluation. Michaud stated that he sees the value of the mobile home is the fact that it grandfathers the building lot. Byrne commented to Webb that she knows that he is an astute businessman and knows a good buy when he sees one and he wouldn’t

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have bought the property if it wasn't a good deal. Byrne thinks that Michaud's assessment is fair for this parcel. Michaud added that if you just look at the parcel as a buildable lot, it already has added value that others don't – a driveway, a septic and well. Bryan reminded everyone that we have a motion on the table by Byrne to accept Michaud's assessment. Waldron seconded the motion; all voted in favor. Webb said he will take it under consideration.

Mr. Webb said he had one more thing he would like to talk about. He asked that someone explain the scrap situation at the Town Shed. Bryan asked Wayne Robinson, road agent, to join the discussion. Robinson explained that there is a place provided behind the highway shed for residents to bring metals. When there is enough to make a load, the highway employees load it into the highway truck and they bring it over to Madbury. The money received then goes into the general fund. Webb asked what the average load weighs. Robinson said he'd have to look at the tickets. Bryan reported that we received approximately \$2100 for the metals recently delivered to Madbury. Bryan asked how many days they spent hauling. Robinson responded it took 2 days. Bryan said the \$2100 clearly covers the expense of hauling it. Webb proposes that he put a container there for residents to put the metals in and he would then haul it to his facility. Bryan expressed concern about the possibility of contaminants getting mixed into the load and the Town being held liable. Bryan said this is a fairly new service that we're providing to residents and it appears that the revenues have been more than covering the expenses. Byrne asked if she could make a suggestion, that in the future when the highway employees have a load ready to haul, they call Mr. Webb and ask what he would pay per ton for the various categories of metal and compare prices. If Mr. Webb can match Madbury's price, the highway department will haul the load to his facility. That was agreeable to all.

Wayne Robinson reported that the Highway Dept borrowed a truck from Burke to change the bulbs in the lights in the parking areas at the Town Office. Burke has a bucket truck he is willing to donate to the Town. It needs a little work done to it, about \$400-\$500 worth. Menter asked about bucket certification. Demeritt, of the highway dept, said they'll look into that. The Board said if they could get a firm price on getting it fixed up for use, getting the hydraulics certified, etc, they can then make a decision. Byrne questioned if they should be looking into wall packs on this building in place of the street lights at the Town Office. Bryan said it is something we can look into.

Bryan opened the Department Head Meeting. Stevens handed out copies of budget information, Employee/Personnel File Procedures, and proposed handbook changes. Bryan reviewed the budget information with the department heads:

1. Approved COLA of 1.7%
2. Level funding or less from current year for 2010 budgets
3. FICA 6.2%, none for full time police or fire department personnel
4. Medicare is 1.45%
5. NH Retirement for town employees is 9.16%; for full-time police is 13.66%; for full-time fire is 17.28%.
6. We will not know insurance costs until about 10/15.
7. We need employee evaluations as soon as possible and Julie has blank copies.

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Bryan reviewed the new proposed handbook changes that are in addition to those that were handed out at the last Department Head Meeting. Bryan asked if there were any questions on the prior handbook changes that were proposed. He then mentioned that they voted last week that personnel files will be kept in the Selectmen's office under lock and key. He continued that there will be a little bit of a transition period as we have to purchase a new file cabinet.

Artimovich made a motion, with a second from Waldron, to accept changes #2-8 on the proposed handbook changes that were distributed at the 9/15/09 department head meeting. Byrne said on #8, regarding the acknowledgement page that needs to be signed by employees, that it should be left up to the department heads to get signatures. Artimovich responded that now that the employee files will be held in the Selectmen's office, we'll have a better handle on who has/has not turned them in. All voted in favor.

Bryan told the department heads that the Board will probably vote on the proposed changes that they received today at next week's meeting. So, if any of them have any questions or comments, they should let them be known before that meeting.

Bryan asked Fire Chief Lemoine if there has been any word about the fire station grant. Lemoine said that 90% of the grant money has been handed out and Londonderry, NH is the only one in the state that got it. He is not sure why they held back the 10%.

Byrne reported for Phyllis Thompson that they are now on-line for e-reg in the Town Clerk's office.

There were no other questions or comments from department heads so Bryan closed the Department Head Meeting.

Stevens presented the following budgets to the Board for their review:

Town Meeting

In 2010 the moderator will be needed for the following events:

Town election, town meeting, state primary, general election = 4 events

Moderator: 4 events @ \$125 ea = \$500

Town Reports: level funded at \$2,500

General Supplies: \$1 to keep line open

Total Budget: \$3,001 which is a 9.05% increase due to 2 additional meetings.

Election

Salaries – Clerks: 3 Clerks will be needed at 3 of the 4 events above. Clerks receive \$100 each per event. 3 clerks @ \$100 each x 3 events = \$900

Stevens said this could be an area of possible savings if we could find unpaid volunteers for this duty. Phyllis Thompson said that would have to be up to the moderator.

Salaries – Supervisors: Supervisors are required at all 4 events and there are 3 supervisors that earn \$200 per event.

3 ppl @ \$200 each x 4 events = \$2,400

Note: Mary Clancy used to receive an additional \$25 for 1 event. At her request, this has been eliminated for this budget.

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Professional Training: \$1 to keep line open

Meals & Services:

Meals – 3 elections @ \$225 each = \$675

Set-up – 3 elections @ \$200 each = \$600

Total \$1,275

Stevens noted that this is another possible cost savings area if we asked Jim Colcord to set it up as part of his regular duties.

Software support: Reduced to zero as this is included in the general budget.

Printing: The supervisors of the checklist asked that the Board confirm that they would like to start using a voter card at town meeting rather than a voice vote. They would use separate colors for yeah & nay votes to be held up rather than a voice vote at both the town meeting and school district meeting. They requested \$500 for the printing of these.

Thompson asked if they would need to count every time. Artimovich explained that you would not need to count the cards unless it appeared to be close or it was requested.

Advertising/Notices: \$500 to post legal notices. This is an increase over 2009 due to the increase in the number of elections.

General Supplies: Cut from \$1,500 to \$500 as they don't foresee any great expenditure other than printer cartridges.

Postage: Removed as it is included in the general budget.

Equipment Maintenance: Requesting \$200 which is a reduction of \$300 from '09 budget.

Total Budget: \$6,276 which represents a 49.36% increase over 2009 due to the increase in number of events.

With the possible cost savings ideas, the budget drops to \$4,776 which is a 13.66% increase over 2009.

Byrne asked if the programming of the ballot machines comes out of this budget. Julie will check on it.

The Supervisors of the Checklist also asked that the Selectmen consider the following:

- Establishing before or at the beginning of town meeting who the designated counters will be and what areas they will be responsible for counting. They also recommend that the counters not be affiliated with any department or warrant article to avoid any controversy. Thompson said this would have to go through the Moderator; the Supervisor's don't have any power there.
- They would also like to see the Town Meeting held before the school district meeting. Julie said she'll need to do some research on this.

Health Officer

Is being level funded at \$100 which is generally donated to the library.

Welfare

Salaries: Our welfare director gets paid quarterly. The request for 2010 is to pay 1st quarter at the current \$500 and the other 3 quarters at \$525 for a total of \$2,075.

FICA/Medicare: Is a percentage of salary.

Professional Training: Since we share our welfare director, this usually gets picked up elsewhere so have reduced it to zero.

Dues: Requesting \$1 to keep line open.

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Direct Assistance: Requesting \$4,000 which is a reduction from \$4,500 in 2009. Although we've only spent \$1,300 so far this year, there are still some cold months to come in '09 so this may increase.

Total Budget: \$6,235 which is a 6.31% decrease from '09.

Regional Associations

Rockingham VNA: Requesting level funding at \$3,746

Seacoast Hospice: Also requesting level funding at \$1,000

Seacoast Red Cross: Requesting an increase from \$350 to \$500

Sexual Assault Support: Level funding requested at \$550

Seacoast Mental Health: Level funding requested at \$1,000

Area Homemakers: Requesting level funding @ \$1,000

Child & Family Services: \$1,000 requested again for 2010

Richie McFarland: Their request of \$2,700 is a decrease from \$4,500 in '09. They base their request on the number of children they service.

Rockingham Nutrition: Also bases their request on the number of Brentwood residents using their service. The 2010 request is \$1,096; an increase from \$538 in '09.

Rockingham Community Action: 2010 request is \$5,707; a \$285 increase from 2009.

R.S.V.P.: Level funding requested at \$125.

Total Budget w/all above requests: \$18,424 which is a 19.65% decrease from 2009.

This does not include A Safe Place or New Outlook. We have not received their requests as of yet. If they submit requests equal to last year it will bring the budget to \$22,124 which represents a 3.52% decrease from '09.

We also received requests from the following which would need to be included as warrant articles:

Lamprey Health Care: \$1,500. This would be their 3rd and final year as a separate warrant article. Next year they would be included in the operating budget as those associations above. The Selectmen requested a letter be sent explaining this to them.

Sea Care Health Services: Submitted a request for \$1,000. Byrne asked what service they provide. Julie read a portion of their letter of request which states they are a non-profit organization providing access to medical care and care coordination services for uninsured adults, prescription assistance for low-income people of all ages and home visiting/health coordination services for children in 21 towns in Rockingham County. Artimovich requested we ask them to come in and meet with the Selectmen.

We have not received a request from Big Brothers/Big Sisters who were included in a separate warrant article in 2009.

At 7:55 p.m. Artimovich made a motion to adjourn. Byrne seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Stevens